POL 14 VIETS

Department of State

TELEGRAM

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R 10-6-82 Saigon 8007

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ACTION EA :9

INFO GPM 03 SC 01 RSC 01 USIA :2 H 02 NSC :0 L 03 INR 07 P 04 CIA 04
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8436
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK UNN
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG UNN
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8007

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: VINH BINH

REF: SAIGON 68:4

1. ELEVEN OF :5 PERSONS WHO INITIALLY FILED FOR THE TWO VIETNAMESE SEATS AT STAKE IN VINH BINH REMAIN IN THE RACE, AD DO THREE OF FOUR WHO ORIGINALLY FILED FOR THE SINGLE CAMBODIAN SEAT. BASIC BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON THESE

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PERSONS WAS REPORTED REFTEL.

2. VIETNAMESE CANDIDATES DO MINH NGHIA AND TRUONG HUU HANH, BOTH MEMBERS OF ARVN, WERE UNABLE TO GET MILITARY

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LEAVE. JUYAH DAT BUU'S APPLICATION WAS INCOMPLETE AND NGUYEN VAN DOC WITHDREW. ARVN LT COL NGUYEN VAN THANS CANDIDACY WAS CHALLENGED BY NGUYEN VAN LOC AND SEVERAL OTER CANDIDATES WHO COMPLAINED THAT LESS THAN SIX MONTHS PASSED SINCE THANH RELINQUISHED HIS POSITION AS VINH BINH PROVINCE CHIEF. LOCAL ELECTION COUNCIL REFERRED THE CASE TO CENTRAL ELECTION COUNCIL WHICH RULED IN THANHS FAVOR ON GROUNDS HE HAD IN EFFECT NOT BEEN EXERCISINGHIS AUTHORITY IN THEPROVINCE FOR THE REQUIRED TIME AS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS FOLLOWING HIS WOUNDING BY A MINE HE HAD BEEN INCAPACITATED.

3. IN RACE FOR CAMBODIAN SEAT CANDIDACY OF SON SUONG, A LOCAL SCHOOL TEACHER, HSS BEEN CHALLENGED ON TECHNICAL GROUNDS THAT HE APPLIED FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE LOCAL EDUCATION OFFICE INSTEAD OF FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IN SAIGON. SUONGIS SUPPORTED BY THE LEADERSHIP OF ONE FACTION OF THE NGUYEN THUY THERAVADA

BUDDHIST ELEMENT IN VINH BINH. ALTHOUGH CENTRAL ELECTION COUNCIL HAS REPORTEDLY RULED AGAINST SUONG. CHAU TU LIEN, CHAIRMAN OF VINH BINH NGUYEN THUY ASSOCIATION, SAYS THE DECISION MAY YET BE REVERSED.

4. IF SUONG DOES NOT RUN, LIEN SAYS NGUYEN THUY THERAVADA BUDDHISTS (MEANING HIS FACTON) WILL SUPPORT KIM NGAN IN THE CONTEST FOR THE CAMBODIAN SEAT EVEN THOUGH NGAN IS A CATHOLIC AND AS A CIVIL SERVANT HAS NOT SPENT MUCH TIME IN VINH BINH RECENTLY. NGAN RAN FOR THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FROM KIEN GIANG REPORTEDLY AS A PROTEGE OF IV CORPS CAMBODIANAFFAIRS OFFICER LT COL KIM KHANH.

5. MOST LIKELY WINNER OF CAMBODIAN SEAT AT THIS TIME APPEARS TO BE KIEN OT, CHAIRMAN OF LOCAL THERAVADA BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION .VINH BINH CAMBODIAN BUDDHIST AFFAIRS VASTLY COMPLICATED BY PRESENCE OF AT LEAST THREE ELEMENTS, ONE "THERAVADA," AND TWO "NGUYEN THUY" BUDDHIST

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FACTIONS). SOT IS BROTHER OF VINH BINH DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR SECURITY MAJOR KIEN CHANG. CANDIDATE OF THERAVADA BUDDHISTS IN LAST YEARS CA ELECTIONS, TIEU HUY SANG, WON AT LEAST PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE SPLIT WITHIN NGUYEN THUY RANKS WHICH STILL PERSISTS. SOT SAYS HE FOLLOWS INSTRUCTIONS OF SAIGON THERAVADA BUDDHIST

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LEADER SON THAI NGUYEN WHO IS ASSOCIATED WITH KHMER SERAI LEADER SON NGOC THANH AN WITH LAM EM, THERAVADA BONZE RECENTLY DESIGNATED HEAD OF VIEN HOA DAO IN RECENT REORGANIZATION OF TAM CHAU BUDDHISTS UNDER NEW UNITED BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION CHARTER.

6. ALSO IN RACE FOR CAMBODIAN SEAT IS THACH NHON, MEMBER OF OTHER NGUYEN THUY FACTION.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON LEADING CANDIDATES FOR VIETNAMESE SEATS FOLLOWS:

A. NGUYEN VAN THANH, ARVN LT COL, FORMER PROVINCE CHEIF OF VINH BINH UNTIL WOUNDED BY MINE IN SPRING OF 1967. BELIEVED TO BE CLOSE TO ARVN 9TH DIVISION COMMANDER GENERAL LAM QUANG THI. THANH HAS A GOOD CHANCE. MANY OF THE OFFICIALS WHOM HE APPOINTED ARE STILL IN VINH BINH AND CAMBODIAS ARE SAID TO LIKE HIM. HOWEVER, AS PROVINCE CHIEF THANH WAS REMOTE FROM PEOPLE AND WILL HAVE TO RELY ON FRIENDS AND ORGANIZATION MLRE THAN ON POPULAR APPEAL.

B. NUYNH CHI CONG, FORMER DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR ADMINSTRATION AND FIANCNE OFFICIAL FROM 1959-65. BUDDHIST. SAID TO HAVE GOOD REPUTATION AND CONTACTS WITH VILLAGE OFFICIALS.

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C. NGUYEN VAN LOC, FORMER POLICE CHIEF IN PHU VINH,

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FORMER CANTON CHIEF. FORMER CHAIRMAN OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, AND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DEPUTY. CATHOLIC. REPRESENTED THIEU/KY TICKET IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RACE IN VINH BINH. LOC HAS BEEN CRITICIZED (AS HAVE BEEN OTHER CA DEPUTIES) FOR "GOING OFF TO SAIGON AND DOING NOTHING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO ELECTED HIM." LOC IS STILL CONSIDERED A COMPETENT POLITICIAN WITH GOOD CONTACTS WITH VILLAGE OFFICIALS. HE IS GENERALLY BELIEVED TO BE SUPPORTED BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND MAY HAVE IMPORTANT SUPPORT FROM VINH BINH CAMBODIANS AS WELL.

8. CANDIDATES WITH SOME CHANCE INCLUDE:

A. NGO CONG DUC, ALLEGEDLY WEALTHY AND SPENDING MUCH MONEY ON THE CAMPAIGN. (CANDIDATE PHAM THANH SANG ACCUESE DUC OF HAVING BOUHT HIS POPULAR FORCES ASSIGNMENT AND OF BEING IN EFFECT A "GHOST" PF (ON ROLLS FOR PAY PURPOSES ONLY) WHO MAKES MONEY FROM PROSTITUTION IN SAIGON. THESE CHARGES ARE UNVERIFIED.

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B. NGUYEN THANH DO, CATHOLIC, CHAIRMAN OF LOCAL TRANSPORTATION WORKERS UNION, MEMBER OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AND ASSISTANT TO NGUYEN VAN LOC AS VINH BINH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THIEU/KY IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE.

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